

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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**STATE OF MAINE**  
130<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATURE  
SECOND REGULAR SESSION



Disposition of bills and summaries of all laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY,  
UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

July 2022

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## **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY**

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 16 was enacted as an emergency measure effective March 29, 2022.

### **LD 1829 An Act To Amend the Charter of the Ogunquit Sewer District**

#### **ENACTED LAW SUMMARY**

Private and Special Law 2021, chapter 15 amends the charter of the Ogunquit Sewer District. It updates statutory cross references within the charter and revises the charter for consistency with the Standard Sewer District Enabling Act. It also increases the district's debt limit and allows the district to furnish sewerage services to parts of adjoining municipalities served by a failing or failed subsurface wastewater disposal system or septic system.

### **LD 1847 An Act To Prohibit a Public Utility from Terminating or Disconnecting Service to a Public Safety Facility without Advance Notice and Approval**

#### **ENACTED LAW SUMMARY**

Public Law 2021, chapter 586 requires a public utility, before it terminates or disconnects a public safety facility's utility service for nonpayment of public utility rates, fees or charges, to provide at least 60 days' advance written notice to the facility of its intent to terminate or disconnect utility service and to obtain written authorization from the Public Utilities Commission and the Department of Public Safety to terminate or disconnect the utility service. It requires the commission to assess administrative penalties against public utilities that violate the law's requirements and establishes penalty amounts applicable only to these violations. It also requires the commission to adopt or amend rules to ensure that process or system changes undertaken by a public utility to comply with the law's requirements are cost effective, result in operation and maintenance costs that are prudent and reasonable and do not involve capital investment.

Public Law 2021, chapter 586 was enacted as an emergency measure effective April 12, 2022.

### **LD 1894 An Act To Support Municipal Broadband Infrastructure through Incentives and Competition**

#### **ENACTED LAW SUMMARY**

Public Law 2021, chapter 616 establishes a registration process administered by the Public Utilities Commission for consumer-owned public utilities seeking to provide broadband or other Internet access services to the public. Prior to exercising any authority it may have pursuant to other law, a consumer-owned public utility must register with the commission and identify a contact person knowledgeable about the proposed or planned broadband and Internet access systems activities.

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The commission must inform the consumer-owned public utility of the requirements of Title 35-A, section 713.

The law also makes changes to the Municipal Gigabit Broadband Network Access Fund including:

1. Authorizing the ConnectMaine Authority to award funds to provide grant matches to municipalities that are applying for grants from other sources that require fund matching;
2. Excepting municipalities receiving funds for grant matching purposes from the 25% cash match requirement;
3. Requiring municipalities receiving grant match funding to provide services to unserved community anchor institutions in the project area into which they are extending services if those unserved community anchor institutions will provide the public with access to the Internet; and
4. Directing the authority to engage in rulemaking to define “project area” and “unserved community anchor institutions” for the purposes of grant match funding.

The law requires the authority, in consultation with the commission and the Office of the Public Advocate, to develop standard charter provisions that may be used by a water district to develop a legislative proposal to amend its charter to operate broadband or other Internet access systems or to provide broadband or other Internet access services to the public.

### **LD 1913 An Act To Create the Electric Ratepayer Advisory Council**

#### **ENACTED LAW SUMMARY**

Public Law 2021, chapter 623 establishes the Electric Ratepayer Advisory Council which is tasked with making recommendations to the Public Advocate regarding methods to ensure that ratepayers in the State are able to afford electricity. It requires the Public Advocate to submit a report by December 1st of each year to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over utilities and energy matters on the activities of the council and its recommendations. The committee may report out a bill relating to the recommendations of the council.

Public Law 2021, chapter 623 was enacted as an emergency measure effective April 18, 2022.